

Eastern Illinois University The Keep

Distinguished Faculty Award

Faculty Senate

2019

2019 - Newton Key

Faculty Senate

Follow this and additional works at: https://thekeep.eiu.edu/distinguished_faculty_award

Recommended Citation

Faculty Senate, "2019 - Newton Key" (2019). *Distinguished Faculty Award*. 3.
https://thekeep.eiu.edu/distinguished_faculty_award/3

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Senate at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Distinguished Faculty Award by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.

The Faculty Senate of Eastern Illinois University announced that the Distinguished Faculty Award for 2019 goes to Dr. Newton Key, Director of EIU's Faculty Development & Innovation Center (FDIC) and Professor of History.

Dr. Key came to EIU in 1989, after completing his M.A. and Ph.D. in History at Cornell University and his M.Phil in Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. Over the past three decades, Dr. Key "has developed a reputation," in the words of EIU's History Chair Sace Elder, "not only as an outstanding colleague and teacher, but also as an internationally recognized historian of seventeenth-century England."

Widely known across campus as "an innovative, energetic, and lively instructor whose enthusiasm for teaching is matched by his own passion for learning," Dr. Key was nominated by Elder with supporting letters from other EIU faculty, and selected by the Awards Committee of the Faculty Senate. Todd Bruns, Chair of Faculty Senate, commented that "Dr. Key has led many important initiatives in his career at EIU, in particular the *Localities* website and journal, and the expansion of Faculty Development into the Faculty Development and Innovation Center. He is an integral part of developing active learning on campus, an excellent scholar, and a warm and collegial colleague. This award is very well deserved."

One of Dr. Key's "major achievements as a scholar," according to fellow Professor of History Dr. Bailey Young, is his co-authored textbook, *Early Modern England, 1485-1714: A Narrative History*, as well as an edited primary source companion volume, *Sources and Debates in English History, 1485-1714*. In commenting on this achievement, Elder pointed out that merely having the textbook go into a third edition, currently in the works, is "impressive enough." But, she continued, "that the book, written by two American scholars, is used widely *in the UK* as a standard English History textbook is even more impressive!"

Zach Newell, EIU's Dean of Library Services, has been struck by Dr. Key's contributions to campus. Since his arrival at EIU last summer, Newell has been working closely with Dr. Key on a new Student Development and Innovation Center in Booth Library, and credits Dr. Key's "passion, persistence and vision for the future" for pushing forward plans for this new space for learning on campus, citing the "intellectual partnership" formed between the FDIC and Booth Library as key to the success. "In my short tenure at EIU, the partnership with Newton has been one of the more valuable collaborations I have encountered in my 15 years in academia," Newell noted.

Director of EIU's Humanities Center, Dr. CC Wharram has often collaborated on projects with the FDIC and was surprised to learn that Dr. Key hadn't already received the honor. "When I canvassed faculty asking for input on the nomination, the most common response was 'Surely he has already won it. Can you win it more than once?'" Wharram believes that Dr. Key could well have won this award years ago. "I think it's important that we're rectifying this oversight to such a deserving scholar, instructor, and administrator. He's the whole package—exactly what everyone wants in a professor and a colleague."

Provost Jay Gatrell was also pleased to see Dr. Key recognized as a distinguished member of the EIU faculty. “Simply put, Newton Key is a model colleague whose commitment to student learning is unparalleled,” the Provost said. “He is a thoughtful scholar whose work engages the profession and enriches the classroom. Additionally, I, as well as the entire campus, truly appreciate his intentional leadership as director of the Faculty Development & Innovation Center.”